



NEWS RELEASE

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USDA TO EXAMINE HEALTH MANAGEMENT IN BEEF INDUSTRY

Richmond, Virginia – The U.S. Department of Agriculture is taking an in-depth look at priority health and management issues facing U.S. beef operations in an effort to help further the understanding of potential disease threats.

Conducted through USDA's National Animal Health Monitoring System (NAHMS), the *Beef 2007-08 Study* marks the third time NAHMS has focused on cow-calf operations, an important segment of the beef industry. From October through November, representatives from USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) will survey selected large beef operations in 24 states including Virginia.

"The *Beef 2007-08 Study* is a grass-roots effort to gather health data on America's beef farms," said Herman Ellison, Director of the NASS Virginia Field Office. "In order to continue to be highly productive, the U.S. beef industry relies on this objective, science-based information regarding successful management practices."

Beef producers will be asked to provide data regarding herd management, herd health, disease prevention practices and numerous other aspects of their operation. The *Beef 2007-08 Study* will identify production practices and health measures that promote efficient production and improve product quality.

Major objectives for this study include:

- identifying research priorities;
- identifying critical factors limiting production; and
- evaluating ways to help mitigate the threat of disease introduction into herds.

As with all NAHMS studies, individual responses are kept strictly confidential and used only in combination with other responses to report regional and national estimates. This assures that, regardless of size, participating operations cannot be identified when the results of the study are reported.

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